

## **Statement of Congressman Brian Baird, Third District of Washington**

### **House Resources Subcommittee on National Parks Recreation and Public Lands**

**February 7, 2002**

First, I would like to thank the Chairman of the Subcommittee, Mr. Radonovich, for holding a hearing on this important piece of legislation. I would also like to thank my colleague from Oregon, David Wu, for working to ensure that Southwest Washington's role in the Lewis and Clark commemoration can be recognized by the National Park Service and enjoyed by all Americans. I am also grateful to Congressman Mark Souder, for his strong support of the bill.

The Bicentennial Commemoration of the Lewis and Clark expedition is only one year away. In 2003, communities across the nation will begin commemorating the Corps of Discovery and the promise that they brought back. It is my hope that during this commemoration, Americans will visit important stops along this journey of discovery in the Third Congressional District, including Station Camp and Fort Canby State Park.

On November 15, 1805, William Clark stopped at Station Camp, sometimes referred to as Megler's Rest, and proclaimed, "I am in full view of the ocean." It was at this historic site that Clark penned his famous map indicating that the Corps had completed one of Thomas Jefferson's directives-to reach the Pacific Ocean. This is also the site of the historic vote taken by Captains Meriwether Lewis and William Clark to determine where the Corps would camp for the winter. Although the year was 1805, nearly 60 years before the emancipation of the slaves and a century before women were given the privilege of voting, Lewis and Clark called for a vote by the entire Corps. Both Sacagawea, the Shoshone interpreter, and York, Clark's slave, were allowed an equal vote with all other members of the Corps. This historic moment occurred at Station Camp. It is indicative of the forward thinking employed by the Captains throughout the journey which led to their incredible level of success.

Today, I welcome the opportunity to discuss the importance of this legislation, which seeks to expand the Ft. Clatsop National Memorial, the only unit in the National Park System that is solely dedicated to the amazing journey of Lewis and Clark. Of great importance to my congressional district, the legislation calls for the Secretary of the Interior to study the inclusion of the "Station Camp" site and Fort Canby within the Fort Clatsop National Memorial.

Although "Station Camp" is considered the end of the voyage, it is also true that the Northwesternmost point of exploration of the Corps of Discovery was their trip to Cape Disappointment, now embedded within Fort Canby State Park. Here, the party had direct contact with the Pacific, which Clark described in his memoir.

The legislation calls for the National Park Service to work collaboratively with the States of Washington and Oregon and Indian tribes on the expansion of Fort Clatsop to study including these new sites before the start of the bicentennial of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, planned to take place from 2003 to 2006. Companion legislation has already passed the Senate by unanimous consent and the bill enjoys broad support from the Washington and Oregon congressional delegations as well as from the Washington State Historical Society's Lewis and Clark bicentennial project.

I appreciate your careful consideration of this request for inclusion of these important historical sites within the Fort Clatsop National Memorial and I look forward to answering any questions from members of the committee.

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